Ethnographic Materials from the Muslim Hemshinli
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Along an area stretching across the Black Sea coast from the Turkish province of Rize through Georgia and Abkhazia to southern Russia lives a population of as many as a quarter of a million Armenians who refer to themselves as *homšè(n)cîk* (Turkish *hemšînli*; henceforth ‘Homshentsik’) or residents of the northeastern Turkish region of Hamshen. Interestingly, their ethnicity is no longer easily determined by consulting the Turkish Homshentsik. The Homshentsik in Turkey have been Muslim for at least two centuries, and are considered by many Turks to be a variety of Laz (Benninghaus 1989:497). Younger Turkish Homshentsik apparently consider themselves to be a Turkic tribe, an opinion shared in print in various Turkish sources (Benninghaus 1989:486-7). Their personal names are generally of Turkish or Caucasian origin (1).

(1) Homshentsi names cf. Georgian (Glonti 1967):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homshentsi name</th>
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<td>čiia</td>
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<td>boko</td>
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In a series of important articles (Dumézil 1963, 1965, 1967, 1986), Georges Dumézil described the language of two Homshentsi villages in the Artvin province. The language of these villages is clearly a form of the Hamshen dialect of Armenian, yet as we shall see it differs significantly from the Christian Hamshen dialects described by Adjarian (1947).

We have been working since January of 1995 with a 25-year-old Homshentsi who was born and raised in a village of some 1000 inhabitants, located 5 kilometers from the Georgian border and from the Black Sea coast in the Artvin province of Turkey. A monograph on the language (*homšèncîma*, henceforth ‘Homshetsmâ’) and culture of the Homshentsi community is currently in preparation (Vaux and Hachikian 1996). The purpose of this paper is to give a preliminary report on some of the linguistic and ethnographic results of this work.

Homshentsi culture is rich in songs, tales, jokes, riddles, and other elements of oral literature. We collect here some representative examples of these genres. The format of the materials presented here closely follows that employed by Dumézil; for detailed linguistic analyses, the interested reader should consult Vaux and Hachikian 1996. Standard Western Armenian equivalents are provided in footnotes.

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1 Thanks to Hagop Hachikian and James Russell for helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
2 Due to the delicate political situation in eastern Turkey, our informant has requested that we withhold his name and that of his village.
1. Riddles
Like the other peoples in Turkey, the Homshentsik are fond of riddles. Some, like the following, are paralleled in Turkish:

(2) Q: \textit{max me havqit caxke tei} ‘I put a sieve full of egg on the roof’\textsuperscript{3}
A: \textit{asdas} ‘star’ (Standard Western Armenian \textit{wununq asdas})

cf. Turkish (Uraz 1933, #143):

(3) Q: \textit{dam üsünde bir kalbur yumurda} ‘a sieve full of egg on the roof’
A: \textit{yildiz} ‘star’

Others have no Armenian or Turkish parallels that we are aware of:

(4) Q: \textit{galati me kack bade tevi} ‘I threw a basket of shit against the wall’\textsuperscript{4}
A: \textit{onqiç} ‘ear’ (Standard Western Armenian \textit{ulqurпq aganc})

(5) Q: \textit{gerta gerta iz çuni, yed ku ka ačvı çuni} ‘it goes and goes and has no footprint; it returns and has no eye’\textsuperscript{5}
A: \textit{ked} ‘river’

(6) Q: \textit{jompu vaan hašnaj senduk} ‘a locked lockbox on the road’\textsuperscript{6}
A: \textit{mazarlux} ‘cemetery’

2. Sayings
Our informants from Turkey share a predilection for sayings and proverbs. Our Homshentsi informant has often had occasion to cite topical proverbs in both Turkish and his own language. When speaking of an untrustworthy person, for example, one can say:

(7) \textit{eyesin sabon kəsvaj če}? ‘he’s never washed his face with soap’

The Western Armenians have a similar saying, \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin meqon kəsvaj če} ‘his face isn’t anointed with chrism’, which is used in the same sense. One notes in the Hamshen version of this saying an instance of the general dechristianization of the culture of the Muslim Homshentsik. The same phenomenon manifests itself in the story in

\textsuperscript{3} Standard Western Armenian \textit{dam wununq caxke tei}.
\textsuperscript{4} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{agac} \textit{devq hagac} \textit{agac} \textsuperscript{2} \textit{hphup} \textit{gaci} \textit{badin devi} (zarq). Homshentsma has two verbs derived from Common Armenian \textit{tali} ‘give’; \textit{devi} ‘give’ and \textit{tevi} ‘hit’ (Adjarian 1947.137). The latter form is employed here.
\textsuperscript{5} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin meqon kəsvaj če} ‘his face isn’t anointed with chrism’.
\textsuperscript{6} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin oʃaı kəsvaj če}.

\textsuperscript{2} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin meqon kəsvaj če}.
\textsuperscript{3} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin meqon kəsvaj če}. 
\textsuperscript{5} Standard Western Armenian \textit{hphup hphup qunawd} \textit{čy yeresin meqon kəsvaj če}.
(14) below; for a general discussion of the dechristianization of Homshetsi language and culture, one can consult Vaux 1996.

When an untrustworthy person approaches, one says:

(8) ṣune iša pade kaša

‘remember the dog; get the stick’

The Homshetsik share with other Muslim societies a general distrust of dogs; in our informant’s village, for example, old and antisocial dogs are often hanged. Excessively aggressive dogs are fended off with a stick; our informant employs the cognate of Standard Western Armenian քայքառ հայր ‘wood’ in this sense. The undesirable person is thus likened to a troublesome dog in this saying. There is a close parallel in the Turkish expression itti an, sopayi elline al ‘remember the dog; take the stick in your hand.’ However, the Homshetsma idiom is clearly not a direct translation of the Turkish, which would be something like ṣune iša pade tevit meč ar; rather, the Homshetsma expression has a clear metrical structure and rhyme that the Turkish version lacks.

If the unwanted person decides to initiate a conversation, one can say:

(9) kemane kašajuim kezigi

‘I played the violin for you’

The interpretation of this saying is analogous to the American act of covering one’s ears; the playing of the violin drowns out the sound of one’s interlocutor, effectively sending the message ‘I don’t care about you.’

Finally, the Homshetsik save some choice words for their Caucasian neighbors, the Laz and the Abkhaz. Of the Laz they say:

(10) fijnuxvon čak xelk onin

‘they have as much brains as a bird’

The bird’s song is commonly equated with human language in Armenian folklore; in this vein, our informant mentions that some of his Armenian-speaking friends refer to his language as fijnuxvon lizu ‘bird language’ (a similar label is used by Vancic to refer to the Van dialect). Note two interesting facts about the form fijnuxvon: it shows semantic extension of its ancestor čnčux ‘sparrow’, and it preserves the ancient genitive in -uan (cf. Classical mahan ‘death-genitive’).

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8 Standard Western Armenian քայքառ հայր; suna hiše playa kaše, cf. Eudokia suna yiše, pata gase ‘said when a bad man comes right when one is talking about him’ (Gazančan 1899.111; transcription is Gazančan’s).
9 Standard Western Armenian քայքառ մայր պահի; չտաղ կաշեցի կեզի.
10 Standard Western Armenian քնիւխ ճախ ճախ մայր թոյսի մորլում էլ աբ աշ երկեր սիմ. չոր հավ պան պամ.
11 The Armenians referred to are from Istanbul and Kayser, and do not speak our informant’s dialect. Thus, the form fijnuxvon lizu is our informant’s rendition in his own dialect of what the friends told him, rather than the form they actually produced.
The defining characteristic of the Abkhaz, who live in scattered villages to the south, seems to be gluttony, at least in the eyes of the Homshentsik. They say of the Abkhaz:

(11) abaza puruc puruc giav kayite uruc\(^2\).
    ‘An Abkhaz ate so much that his belly swelled and he farted’

The Abkhaz in turn consider the Homshentsik to be excessively fertile, and attribute their own drastic decline in numbers to the rapid expansion of the Homshentsik.

3. Songs

The Homshentsik possess a rich stock of unique songs in both Turkish and Homshetsma. Two of the more popular occasions for singing are weddings and minstrel competitions, in which wandering minstrels gather in the village square and engage in song improvisation competitions. A typical verse composed in such a competition that our informant remembered runs as follows.

(12) monin i ve ellosum  I’ll go up the *moni* tree\(^3\)
    moni mole va towum    I’ll drop the *moni* leaves down
    ce kyusin avêganoun  Your village’s girls
    govu bes tarmanobum    I’ll feed like cows\(^4\)

4. Poems

Another interesting example of wordplay in the mixed Turkish-Armenian context that characterizes Homshentsi culture is the counting rhyme in (13), which our informant’s mother employed to teach him the numbers from one to ten:

(13) meq, terone pe(r)g  one, a mattock outside
    ergus, terone çapa    two, a hoe outside
    yiye, govu tek\(^5\)    three, a cow’s placenta

\(^2\) Standard Western Armenian աբազա պուրվու պուրվու գիավ կյութ մուր. `abaza dodre dodre gerav pora uyečav. The origin of the form kayit ‘belly’ is unclear; it may be related to Turkish kariń ‘belly’.

\(^3\) Malxaseanc’ (1944.3.252) provides the following entry for *moni*: ‘an uncertain sort of shrub like a hazelnut tree, with leaves like a peach, the trunk below thinner than the upper part, the wood rotten, which releases a phosphorescent light at night. Animals eat the leaves (?)’.

\(^4\) Standard Western Armenian մոնին ի վե ևուսում մանին ի վեր բիդ յեյելեմ
    մոնիի մոլե վա տոււմ (քարի) մանիի դերեվա վա տոււմ (էրքեն)
    կեր կյուշին ավեգանուն
    գուվու բես տարմանուբում քառանուշ գուվու բես տարման բիդ դամ. The word is mentioned in three other sources that we are aware of: Hulucan and Hačem 1964.440 gloss the form *deg* in the nearby Xoloğur dialect as ‘the thick membrane that falls out when a cow or goat gives birth; the sac around a calf’; Malxaseanc’ 1944.1.501 glosses *deg* as ‘1. dirt left after sweeping. 2. dirt inside the bready parts of wild seeds; 3. membrane, in which the fetus grows in the mother’s womb, and which comes out after birth. ʂapik, təŋker, əŋkerk’ (he also mentions an idiom *mê* *deg kutes* ‘what the hell are you doing/saying!?’); Aşavcan 1911.274 glosses *dekü* (which he cites as an Axalca form) as ‘1. dirt left after sweeping. 2. veil or mask of the foetus, in the mother’s
čors, jile nors  
*hink, terone di(n)g  
vec, kenafin tec  
oxte, dolavin tuxie  
ume, terone tute  
dase, tarkin tase

four, sparse corn sprouts  
five, a sack outside  
six, smelly air in the outhouse  
seven, the sheet of paper in the cupboard  
eight, the mulberry outside  
nine, the old pants  
ten, the bowl on the shelf

Notice here that whereas the middle word can be of Turkish origin, the rhyming couplet is always drawn from the native Armenian word stock, with two exceptions, čapa and tás. The former is particularly interesting, as it alone fails to rhyme with the number it accompanies. This striking asymmetry suggests that the rhyme for ergus ‘2’ was originally some native Armenian lexical item, which was subsequently replaced, perhaps when the meaning of the original Armenian form was forgotten.

5. Stories

Our informant is an endless font of jokes and tales. We provide some representative examples here. The transcription system employed here is the one used by Dumézil in the articles mentioned earlier.

(14) Têmel’s Head
1 yiyek hadik enger cauxun ivê kayax enuš gerton. 2 cauxuin keoxn ivê kellin kayaxe genin. 3 šad barak gelli; hemi inçencuš kuzîn. 4 andi inçencenele erguse uuš jompacove jompan inçenxun meg al na satarin kelexn jompan inçencoxun gasa. 5 darsin onune têmel gelli. 6 têmele évone jêdin gaba gû, ‘yes hemi asdi inçencenim’ gasa. 7 andi engerdake jompan kiçun put genin marun vuñude go keloxe çgo. 8 ‘yahu,’ gasin, ‘asu keloxe gar ta čgar ta?’ 9 inç enik inç enik oê?’ 10 yuñuc put genin, ‘yahu,’ gasin, ‘meg era gasa genoče harc enik balki genige kidenax gû.’ 11 genoče mode gerton. 12 ‘yahu,’ gasin, ‘ku marun keloxe vaan er ta vaan čer ta?’ 13 genign a gasa, ‘as aksan a,’ gasa, ‘kahvalti hazrîamiš i,’ gasa, ‘hâi marî giav ta giav oê ta čkidim,’ gasa.

1 Three friends go up a mountain to make a boat. 2 They climb up to the top of the mountain and make the boat. 3 [The mountain] is very steep; now they want to lower

16 Standard Western Armenian

\[\text{dhe, nûnûn pišpiš} \quad \text{meg, tursa pişpin}\\ 
\text{klipnu, nûnûn pišpiš2} \quad \text{yergu, tursa pişpiş}\\ 
\text{klipnu, nûnûn nêk} \quad \text{yerek, govu teke}\\ 
\text{gên, loîn ûhî} \quad \text{čors, nosor jîl}\\ 
\text{çêran, çêran ûhî} \quad \text{hink, tursa dîk}\\ 
\text{çêran, ûhînañûn ûnna} \quad \text{več, bedkarani hod}\\ 
\text{klipnu, nûnûn pišpiş} \quad \text{yot, tostani tûto}\\ 
\text{klipnu, nûnûn pišpiş} \quad \text{tûto, tursa tûtû}\\ 
\text{dhe, nûnûn pišpiş} \quad \text{ins, vardîgi hîn}\\ 
\text{dhe, nûnûn pišpiş} \quad \text{dase, taraqin tasa}\\ 
\text{yot, tostani tûto} \quad \text{tûto, tursa tûtû}\\ 
\text{ins, vardîgi hîn} \quad \text{dase, taraqin tasa}\\ 
\text{tûto, tursa tûtû} \quad \text{tûto, tursa tûtû}\\ 
\text{dase, taraqin tasa} \quad \text{dase, taraqin tasa}\\ 
\]
[the boat down the mountain]. 4 Then to lower it, two go down by one path; the other says, ‘I’ll lower it down the steeper path.’ 5 The lad’s name is Temel. 6 Temel ties a rope around his neck and says, ‘Now I’ll lower it.’ 7 Then the friends go down the path and see that there’s a man’s body, but there’s no head. 8 ‘Hey,’ they say, ‘did he have his head or not? 9 What should we do, what shouldn’t we do?’ 10 They look at each other and say, ‘Hey, let’s go ask the wife; maybe she knows.’ 11 They go to the wife. 12 ‘Hey,’ they say, ‘did your husband have a head, or not?’ 13 The wife says, ‘this morning he prepared breakfast, but I don’t know if he ate it, or not.’

The story of Temel’s Head is a variant of a popular Christian Armenian folktale, ‘The Priest’s Head’ or ‘The Missing Friday’; for further discussion, see Russell 1987 and Vaux 1996.

Another important element of daily life amongst the inhabitants of the Black Sea coast is the herding of animals, together with attendant activities such as weaving and butter making. These daily activities play a central role in Homshentsi folklore, as we can see in the next two stories.

(15) The Girl and the Butter
1 martun mege lernan kyase ku ku. 2 koni me kilo yae pia gu hede dune. 3 var tena gu jiapniva gerta. 4 axchége ver kella kez gasa im dades iné epir asor gasa. 5 put gena yae go yarin put gena yae kič me halaj a. 6 kez gasa yes iné enim gasa. 7 hemi gasa nor yae x a egav haleca. 8 im dade ini ji gorčova gasa. 9 as a kič me cokmecni gasa. 10 iné enim iné enim oč? 11 yae kič me ture hona gu aakaguce dage cokmecnushi tadi gu. 12 put gena yae šad šad hali gu. 13 kez gasa hemi iné enim gasa. 14 as yes cokmecni gum gasa yae alaveni gasa hali gu. 15 omar a gelli. 16 iné enim iné enim oč asele gerta pade pia gu soban tena gu soban kola gu. 17 yasna sobayin dage tena gu. 18 koni me dakika goneni. 19 put gena yae hepan hali gu. 20 ali gasa aspaj gasa inji gi im dade šad devos a gasa. 21 iné enim iné enim oč? 22 inčik eči gaa. 23 igvon gelli. 24 dade dune ku ku. 25 kizim iné aer gasa. 26 e iné enim baba gasa. 27 as akvon akvonas gasa tadi gum ta cokmecni diye yae cokmec oč gasa.

1 A man comes to the village from the mountain. 2 He brings home a few kilos of butter. 3 He puts it down and goes to the market. 4 His daughter gets up and says, ‘I wonder what my dad brought today?’ 5 She sees there’s some butter. She looks at the butter; it’s a bit melted. 6 “I wonder what I should do?” she says. 7 “Now this new butter came and melted. 8 My dad is going to yell at me!” she says. 9 “I should dry this out a little,” she says. 10 “What should I do, what shouldn’t I do?” 11 She takes the butter a little ways outside to try to dry it under the sun. 12 She sees that the butter is very melted. 13 “Now I wonder what I should do?” she says. 14 “I dry the butter, and it melts more.” 15 It’s summer. 16 Saying “What should I do, what shouldn’t I do?” she goes, brings some wood, puts it in the stove, and lights the fire. 17 She puts the butter under the stove. 18 A few minutes pass. 19 She sees that the butter is completely melted. 20 “Oh god,” she says, “my dad is really going to beat me. 21 What should I do, what shouldn’t I do?” 22 She can’t do anything. 23 It becomes evening. 24 The
dad comes home. 25 “My daughter, what have you done?” he says. 26 “What should I do, papa?” she says. 27 “This morning I tried to dry it out and the butter didn’t dry!”

A popular target of Homshentsi humor is the Ardeletski, the Homshentsik that live in the area around the village of Ardala just to the southwest and speak a closely related subdialecit of Hamshen. A typical Ardeletski joke runs as follows.

(16) The Ardeletski, the Horse, and the Butter
1 ardeleciin mege lernan ciove yak pia gu. 2 coogvon oxtin gelli. 3 aakagn a šad sart gelli. 4 inč enim? kič me nesim u yon kam gasa. 5 koni me saat oncaj gelli. 6 ver terči gu ušaca gasa. 7 mema pur gena na cin gungaj a yake vaan čko. 8 harcena gu kirat yane gir a gasa. 9 cin al šoke kelxun tevajui keloxe tayva tapa gu. 10 ardeleciyin a keloxe cka gu livore hona gu ciun kelxan cvona gu. 11 hem gaiv hem a omečelu ha gasa gasa.

1 An Ardeletski brings butter from the mountain by horse. 2 It’s noontime. 3 The sun is very hot. 4 “What should I do? I’ll sit a little and get comfortable,” he says. 5 A few hours pass. 6 He flies up. “I’m late!” he says. 7 When he looks around, he sees the horse standing there, and the butter isn’t on it. 8 He asks, “O white horse, did you eat the butter?” 9 The horse, which is affected by the heat, nods its head. 10 The Ardeletski gets angry, pulls out his gun, and shoots the horse in the head. 11 “He ate and admitted it without being ashamed!” he said.

As Dumézil (1967.19) notes, Homshentsi humor tends toward the bawdy. One of the milder illustrations of this aspect of Homshentsi wit goes as follows.

(17) The Man and the Horse
1 martun mege čolin gorsevi gu. 2 istus kala gu inus kala gu. 3 šad jarvena gu. 4 šidag hokin ellele birayi dun me desnu gu. 5 ačfoun lus ku ka. 6 terčelov birayi dun mednu gu. 7 garson, čur me bira me du! 8 hokis kella paa al čunim, gasa. 9 garson “paa čunix uaa oč čur oč a bira xemel gasas,” gasa. 10 martxelelov “put aala ina cin bila bira xema gu inč gases?” gasa. 11 garson “hwa,” gasa, “cin im engers a, xeme gasa.” gasa. 12 martce tarna gu put a “emmeš še genim pausuz birayi me homa. 13 inč ases na?” 14 garson “hemi aav. 15 eer im ciun jijascenes garnas na biran xemes gu,” gasa. 16 mart “hwa, ad težvar ča,” gasa. 17 gerta ciun ongučnuuz inči merik me gasa. 18 cin jijase gu, jijase gu, xexenža gu ali jijase gu. 19 garson “aav a, helaš eži,” gasa. 20 martxe xema gu, gerta. 21 dai me hedev, martce ali yet ku ka birayin dunin dare kida. 22 xelok mednu gu. 23 garsonin ali gasa “kides paa čunim. 24 inč ases na, ali genim. 25 inč gelli, bira me du xemim,” gasa. 26 “as jompi paa čunes bira xemushi homa im ciun lacenušet bida. 27 as a eži a na,” garson, “birš xemecer,” gasa. 28 marin a “ha,” gasa, “ama mek dakika me tus hone gaim ta?” 29 garsonhe gasa. 30 martce cin garna tus kelna. 31 mek dakika me hedev ciove yet ku kon. 32 cin ku la ku la ardacuknište tapeta gu. 33 hemi kidek ta as martes jijascenushi homa inč asac? 34 lacenuši homa inč asac? 35 arčine ciun “im jufšules kunat mej a,”
asac. 36 cin al jijaruši gebav xexenfac. 37 hedeq al lacenuši homa cimun, imis hone
fušule desecuc šidag er.

1 A man is lost in the desert. 2 He walks this way and that. 3 He becomes very thirsty. 4 Right when he is about to give up the ghost, he sees a beer house. 5 His eyes shine. 6 He runs and enters the beer house. 7 “Waiter, give me water, give me a beer! 8 I’m giving up the ghost, but I have no money,” he says. 9 The waiter says, “if you have no money, you can’t drink any water or beer.” 10 The man goes crazy and says, “look here, even that horse is drinking beer! What are you saying?” 11 The waiter replies, “hey, the horse is my friend, he can drink.” 12 The man turns and says, “look, I’m penniless; I’ll do anything for a beer. 13 What do you say?” 14 The waiter says, “Okay now. 15 If you can make my horse laugh, you can drink a beer.” 16 The man says, “hey, that’s not very difficult.” 17 He goes to the horse’s ear and says something. 18 The horse laughs and laughs, whinnies, and laughs some more. 19 The waiter says, “that’s okay, bravo!” 20 The man drinks, and leaves. 21 After a year, the man comes back again; he knows the beer house. 22 He enters immediately. 23 He says to the waiter again, “You know, I have no money. 24 Whatever you say, I’ll do it again. 25 What could happen? Give me a beer.” “Since you have no money, in order to drink a beer you must make my horse cry. 27 If you can do this,” says the waiter, “then you can drink a beer.” 28 The man says, “okay, but can I take him outside a minute?” 29 The waiter says sure. 30 The man takes the horse and goes outside. 31 After a minute, he returns with the horse. 32 The horse is crying and crying, tears gushing forth. 33 Now do you know what this man said to make the horse laugh? 34 What did he say to make him cry? 35 For the first, he said to the horse “my penis is bigger than yours.” 36 The horse began to laugh and whinnied. 37 After that, to make the horse cry, he took out his penis and showed him that he was right!

6. Linguistic Notes
In the notation employed below, 14.8 refers to figure (14), sentence 8, and so on.

14.8 asu keloxe gar ta čgar ta? One notes in Homshetsma (as well as in the neighboring dialect of Xotorjr (Hulunean and Hačean 1964.419)) a curious usage of the form ta, the cognate of Standard Armenian (e)čè ‘that, if, whether’, as a marker of yes/no questions17. In order to understand the development of this usage, we need to appreciate two factors. First of all, the prestige language in the area, Turkish, possesses an overt marker of yes/no questions, -ml, as in gitti mi? ‘did he go?’. The development of a yes/no question marker in Homshetsma and Xotorjr is presumably due to the influence of this particular formation in Turkish. Under similar pressure, other Armenian dialects actually borrowed the Turkish morpheme -ml directly; cf. Istanbul umis mi ‘do you have it?’ (Adjarian 1947.154). Hamshen and Xotorjr do not borrow the Turkish form, however; the

17 cf. Adjarian 1947.154. Homshetsma employs uy in the functions of both čè and čè in Standard Modern Armenian, and has no form descended from čè.
question now is how these dialects went about creating a yes/no question marker using the components of their own lexicon, which is the second important factor in our analysis.

It is important to realize that the function of the subordinator 'whether', which is one of the meanings of Armenian (e)tê, is to demarcate yes/no propositions in subordinate clauses. For example, the English sentence I asked her whether she was going is equivalent to I asked her, 'are you going?'; where the embedded question 'are you going?' takes 'yes' or 'no' as an answer. One cannot use 'whether' with embedded questions that do not take a yes/no answer: I asked her, 'how are you doing?' → *I asked whether she was doing. *I asked her whether how she was doing. Hamshen, however, has extended the domain of its form for 'whether', ta, to main clauses. In other words, ta is employed to mark yes/no questions in both main and subordinate clauses.\(^{18}\)

14.10 yuruc This is the genitive/dative of the third person reciprocal pronoun, employed here in the sense '[they look] at each other'. The form is presumably related to Xotorjor and Middle Armenian iruc (same meaning; cf. Karst 1901.231, Hulunean and Haçean 1964.405). However, the Christian Hamshen outcome is iruñ (Adjarian 1947.115; cf. Standard Western iruñ). The form is also problematic phonologically: it is unclear why there is an initial y-, the change of the vowels to u must be accounted for, and one wonders why the intervocalic r is not deleted, as is generally the case in Muslim Hamshen (cf. Dumézil 1963.9). We assume that the reciprocal pronoun was transferred at some point to the -u- declension, yielding an intermediate form *iruç (a similar fate befell aakag 'sun'; see discussion below). The -i- then assimilated in rounding to the -u-, as is common in our informant’s dialect; cf. wix 'other' > uuñ, genitive plural *-ner-n-n > -n. At present we cannot account for the initial y- and the preservation of the -i-.

15.3 jiap-ni-va This clitic group consists of the noun jiap 'market, town' plus the definite article -n plus the preposition i- 'to' plus the adverb va 'down'. The composite meaning is therefore 'down to the market'. Dumézil (1963.15) mentions that since the Homshentsik and their villages are in the mountains, whereas Hopa (where one goes to the market) is on the sea coast, one says 'down to the market' but 'up to the village' (kyus-n iwe). The origins of the form jiap are unclear to us; if it is of native Armenian origin, Homshetsma phonology dictates that it can come from a protoform of one of the following shapes: *(cerab, cerap, ciab, ciap). To the best of our knowledge, none of these forms is attested in any variety of Armenian. Given that all of the major markets and villages in the area are on or near the sea coast, we may also entertain the possibility that jiap derives from *cov-ap 'sea shore'. The development of -ov- to -i- in this case does not conform happily to the standard rules of Homsetsma historical phonology, but the semantics seem appropriate.

15.11 aakag-w-e This form is the genitive singular definite of the noun aakag 'sun', the descendant of Old Armenian aneg-akn, literally 'sun eye'. Note the use of the pronominal

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\(^{18}\) One should also bear in mind, though, that the dialect of Turkish spoken in the Trabzon area employs -do rather than -mi to mark yes/no questions (Hagop Hachikian, personal communication), and it is theoretically possible (though in our opinion unlikely) that the Homshetsma form derives from this rather than from the Armenian form te.
u-dedension genitive suffix -uč, cf. the discussion of yuruc above. It is possible that the switch to the -u- dedension was not arbitrary, but rather an automatic consequence of the loss of the old -a- declension. This possibility remains to be explored further.

15.11 tadi gu 'try-3d singular present' Compare Middle Armenian, Xotorjur tādil 'work' (Ghazaryan and Avetisyan 1987.168, Hulunean and Hāeian 1964.440).

15.14 cokmeci gum A striking feature of Homshetsma is the placement of the person and number agreement affixes. Unlike in Standard Armenian, these can attach to the non-past particle gu, as in (15.14), cokmeci gum 'I (cause to) dry out', < *ćamak-će-n-e gu-m 'dry-causative-verbal particle-thematic vowel non.past-1st.person'\(^9\). Forms such as xemes gu 'you drink' (17.15) demonstrate that the agreement suffixes optionally attach to the verb stem rather than to gu.

The particle gu itself undergoes an interesting set of alternations first noted by Adjarian (1947.139). The expected cognate in Homshetsma of Standard Western gu is gu; this is in fact the form that generally surfaces with consonant-initial verbs (cf. kala gu 'walks' in (17.2)). However, a handful of verbs select ku rather than gu, for reasons that remain unclear to us. Some examples are the verbs 'want' (kuzin 'they want' (14.3)), 'descend' (kičun 'they descend' (14.7)), 'come' (ku ka 'he comes' (5, 15.1), ku kon 'they come' (17.31)), 'cry' (ku la 'he cries' (17.32))\(^20\).

15.20 aspaj 'god'. Also aspaj in the speech of Dumėžil's informant (Dumėžil 1963.7), though the Christian Homshentsik use astvaj (Adjarian 1947.221). Compare Akn asbaj, Van aspac, Zeytun asb\(^h\)aj (Adjarian 1971.1.282).

16.2 coogvon oxen gelli 'it/is/becomes noontime'. coogvon is the genitive singular of coog 'noon', < čerek. Dumėžil's informant uses coeg (Dumėžil 1963.11); compare also Christian Hamshen čorig, čoreg (Adjarian 1947.256). oxen is the genitive/dative singular definite of oxt 'time'; the same form is used by Dumėžil's informant (Dumėžil 1963.35); but cf. Christian Hamshen vakt, vak'et (Adjarian 1947.269). The word ultimately derives from Arabic waqt, presumably via Turkish vakt. The form gelli is the third person singular present of the verb elluš 'be(coming)', which belongs to the -i- conjugation. The first person singular of this verb, gelli, constitutes a minimal pair with kellim, the third person singular present of elluš 'go up', which belongs to the -e- conjugation (second singular kelles).

17.5 ačfenoun 'to his eyes'. This is the dative plural definite form of ačvi 'eye', which has lost its original plural meaning; compare Middle Armenian and Xotorjur ačvi 'eyes', with the Middle Armenian plural suffix -vi (Karst 1901.190, Hulunean and Hāeian

\(^9\) Dumėžil 1967.23 cites a form conkmesnius in the same meaning in the dialect of his informant.

\(^{20}\) Hagop Hachikian (personal communication) informs us that Armenians from Amasia, Sivas, and Tokat also say [ku kə] for 'he comes', though they generally use [gə] with other verbs. We are currently looking into whether these dialects employ [kə] with the other verbs to which it attaches in the Hamshen dialect.
The -i- is deleted in unstressed position, and replaced by an epenthetic -e-. As mentioned above, -noun is the outcome of the plural suffix -ner- plus the genitive dative
-u- plus the definite article -n.

17.22 xelok ‘quickly’. This is of course the cognate of Standard Western ḫulqeg xelōk. However, it means only ‘quickly’, and cannot be used in the sense of ‘clever’ as its literary relative can.

17.26 im ciun lacemushet bidi ‘you must make my horse cry’, literally ‘your making my horse laugh is necessary’. Note the lack of agreement in the possessive phrase im ciun ‘my horse’, where ci ‘horse’ takes third person rather than first person agreement (cf. Standard Western Armenian ǰul & ǰawu im ēlūs, with first person agreement). This is to be contrasted with 17.35 im jufules ‘my penis’, with first person agreement. Various forms of ēlūs ‘(child’s) penis’ occur in many Armenian dialects (cf. Adjian 1911.732, 1971.3.214); the form juful is closely paralleled in Axalexa čičul, Shamaxi and Karabagh čičič. The Turkish dialect of the Trabzon area uses the form jufül in the same sense (Yankoğlu 1943).

17.36 gebav ‘began’. The verb gebčuš from which this form derives should be related to the verb kpæel found in many dialects (cf. Adjian 1911.610). However, the variants of this verb typically have meanings such as ‘attach’, ‘reach’, ‘touch’. The closest meaning is perhaps ‘begin to burn’, found in Tiflis and various other Armenian dialects.

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